

Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-02), the Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, introduced bi-partisan legislation to help veterans transition from military service and find a job. With nearly one-in-four veterans between the ages of 20 and 24 unemployed, the legislation would improve much needed training programs for separating service members, and modify federal hiring practices to encourage the hiring of veterans after their service is complete.

“Our troops have gone above and beyond the call of duty to defend our country, but far too often, when they return home they cannot find a job to help make ends meet,” said Rep. Bishop. “This legislation will dramatically improve the assistance and training available to our veterans, and encourage businesses and government contractors to hire the brave men and women who developed valuable skills while in the armed forces.”

The Hiring Heroes Act of 2011 that Rep. Bishop introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives yesterday is a companion to S. 951 introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) on May 12, 2011. Rep. Norm Dicks (WA-06), Rep. C.W. Bill Young (FL-10), Rep. Bob Filner (CA-51), Rep. Jerry McNerney (CA-11) and Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (MD-06) joined Rep. Bishop as original co-sponsors of the bill.

Along with modernizing federal hiring practices, the bill makes participation in the Transition Assistance Program mandatory for separating service members. It requires that each service member receive an individualized assessment of jobs that they may qualify for when they participate in the Transition Assistance program, and requires the Department of Labor (DOL) to work with each veteran to determine whether they have a job or if they need more assistance.

The Hiring Heroes Act creates new programs aimed at improving the transition from service member to civilian life. It would create a competitive grant program for nonprofit organizations that provide mentoring services and job training that lead directly to job placements. The bill also aims to break down barriers between the Department of Defense (DOD), DOL, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and makes it easier for service members to smoothly transition to veteran status.

“As the war in Iraq comes to an end and we begin to draw down our forces in Afghanistan, even more veterans will be looking for work,” said Rep. Bishop. “We have an obligation to help our

veterans land on their feet when they come home and help them find good paying jobs to support their families. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the House and the Senate to pass the Hiring Heroes Act and provide more support to our veterans.”

“I introduced the Hiring Heroes Act in the Senate because I’ve heard first-hand from veterans that return home with unique technical and leadership skills and can’t find jobs,” said Senator Patty Murray, Chairman of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee. “This landmark legislation will require job skills training for every service member as they leave the military, and will require the Department of Labor to review what military skills and training should be transferable into the civilian sector. These are real, substantive steps to put our veterans to work that come at a pivotal time for our economic recovery and our veterans. I’m hopeful that this bill, which has now been introduced in both houses of Congress and enjoys support from both Republicans and Democrats, can move forward quickly to help our veterans find jobs.”

“Veterans have earned the thanks of a grateful nation when they return home, and employers can benefit from the unique skills, sense of duty, and professionalism veterans possess,” said Rep. McNerney. “The Hiring Heroes Act takes major steps to help our men and women in uniform obtain good jobs when they come home. I look forward to working with a bipartisan group of my colleagues to move this bill forward.”

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[To view a fact sheet of the bill, click here.](#)